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*The New Democracy: A Political Study.* By W. JETHRO BROWN, Professor of Law and Modern History in the University of Tasmania. London, The Macmillan Company, 1899. — ix, 215 pp.

This work is appropriately titled — coming, as it does, from the pen of a professor in the University of Tasmania and devoted, as it is, to a consideration of some of the special problems of Australian democracy. The Australian colonies are to-day furnishing us, in purer form than can elsewhere be found, the results of an application of democratic principles to society and the state. For this reason, if for no other, the work we have to review is welcome.

While accepting as absolutely valid the principle that governing powers should ever be subject to the control of public opinion, Professor Brown recognizes that the satisfactory realization of this in practice is by no means easy. The cynical student of modern politics, he says in his preface,

may be disposed to remark that democracy is an excellent form of government but for two difficulties : no means exist for securing the adequate expression of public opinion, and the opinion would be of little value even if such means could be found. Most impartial men will dissent from such a view, yet it enjoys the merit of defining the two fundamental difficulties of present-day politics — how to express public opinion and how to improve its value.

In a representative democracy, then, we have to solve these two problems : How to secure a governing body that will be truly representative of the electorate for which it acts, and how to obtain such a general moral and intellectual enlightenment as shall lead to the selection of suitable officials and shall subject them, when selected, to a proper pressure of the public will.

In a chapter entitled "The Study of History in Relation to the Problem of Character," Professor Brown advances the view that, as compared with all other politically educative influences, that which comes from the study of history, when properly pursued, stands preëminent.

Above all other questions [he says] towers the question of character. The standard of public opinion must be raised by education, by general and systematic instruction in, or study of, some subject which can arrest the attention, sustain the interest and improve the political judgment. The purpose of the present chapter is to secure a more general recognition of the possibilities which history affords of achieving such ends.

That Professor Brown well establishes the relatively high value of history as a political discipline, there can be no question. But to ascribe to it the efficiency which he gives it is extreme. Something akin to Godwin's belief in the potency of intellectual enlightenment is necessary, in order to see in the study of history anything more than one of the very many instruments that must be relied upon to create a satisfactory public opinion.

As regards the securing of a truly representative body, our author is a firm believer in the Hare system — a system which he says has never been condemned by experience or opposed by an argument not founded on prejudice. Without adding anything distinctively new to the discussion of the merits of this well-known scheme for securing minority representation, Professor Brown gives a conspicuously clear explanation of it; and, moreover, he presents much interesting information as to the results that have followed its recent introduction into Tasmania.

As regards the value of the referendum, a negative view is held, and the usual objections to it are skillfully stated.

For the successful working of democracy under existing conditions we need great men to lead it, skilled men to carry out its decisions and, finally, effective means for securing that its deliberate judgment shall be the standard of legislation. To each of these requisites, the principle of the referendum is directly and manifestly opposed. By attributing ultimate authority to the fluctuating majority, it must tend to drive strong and independent men from politics, to lower the standard of legislation and to increase the sense of popular despotism. It is an undue sacrifice of the qualities which go to make efficiency of government to the considerations of a slightly increased sympathy and a slightly increased educational influence. As such, its principles must be condemned. It is a desperate remedy, which can only be justified by a desperate disease.

A concluding chapter and an appendix of considerable length are devoted to the problem of federating the several Australian colonies. This portion of the work will impress the American reader as commonplace. Possibly, however, this may be due to the fact that to us the general arguments for and against the federal form of government are so familiar that a restatement of them necessarily seems trite.

Professor Brown writes pleasant and accurate English; and his observations, though sometimes obvious, are on the whole eminently sound. One point he makes, however, that is well worth being borne in mind, especially by those who indulge in a general criticism of

the new democracy. This is, that it is not proper to attribute to popular government all of the political corruption and social distress that now exist. Much of this corruption has been the almost inevitable result of material progress, and might easily have developed under any form of government; and many of the social and political problems that remain still unsolved are due rather to the growing complexity of human affairs than to a regulative inefficiency peculiar to governments popularly controlled.

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*The New Pacific.* By HUBERT HOWE BANCROFT. New York, The Bancroft Co., 1900. — 738 pp.

This work is almost *sui generis*. It fits into none of the accepted categories, either literary or scientific. Statistics, economics, sociology, history — all are laid under contribution; but the book is more than a compilation from these sciences. There is something over and above, which is perhaps best described as the personality of the author, his views of men and history, his "criticism of life," his confession of faith. It is perhaps best conceived as a piece of imaginative literature, embodying in almost equal proportions fact and fancy, history and prophecy, all clothed in a style of singular charm.

Beginning with a comparison of the Pacific under the old Spanish régime and to-day, the author takes up successively the year 1898, — which will surely go down in history as a new *annus mirabilis*, — Spanish misrule in America, the Spanish War, the problem of expansion, the terms of peace, the attitude of other nations, the Far East, Europe in Asia, the Pacific Ocean and its borders, the canal question, the resources, climates, mines, manufactures and commerce — present and future — of Pacific lands, the South Sea Isles, Hawaii, the Philippines, race problems, notable voyages, Crusoe Island, the pirates, the Terrestrial Paradise (of Dante), and Calafia, queen of California. A glance at this list of topics suffices to show the wide scope and scholarly character of the work. Indeed, the information here collected is perhaps too extended for the general reader, or even the scholar, while necessarily falling short of the minuteness necessary for an "exporter's guide." And its use as a reference work is rendered difficult by the fact that the title of a chapter is no indication as to what may be found therein, though this defect is partially made good by an excellent index.